

would be better served by honoring the efforts and integrity of citizens such as Alexandr Nikitin rather than trying to silence and punish him.

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS EDUCATION ACT OF 1998

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1998 that would provide block grants to states to identify and assist our nation's most gifted and talented students.

Gifted and talented students are this nation's greatest natural resource. They are our future Thomas Edisons, Langston Hughes, George Gershwin and Albert Einsteins. Unfortunately, these students are not being challenged today and our nation is missing out on their future achievements. According to Secretary of Education Richard Riley, our nation is facing a "quiet crisis" in that we are not appropriately educating our nation's most gifted and talented students. We must challenge these students with exceptional talent so they do not slip through the cracks and their talent does not go untapped.

My legislation addresses this "quiet crisis" by providing block grants to state education agencies to identify gifted and talented students from all economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds—including students of limited English proficiency and students with disabilities—and to provide support programs and services to ensure these students achieve their full potential. Funding would be based on each state's student population, with each state receiving a minimum of \$1 million per year.

I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in my commitment to ensure our nation's gifted and talented students reach their fullest potential and to ensure we have a new generation of Americans ready to meet the demand of the 21st Century.

POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE

HON. MERRILL COOK

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues the story of a remarkable woman from Salt Lake City. Her story, and that of her family, brought home to me the reality of a tragic and widespread affliction called Polycystic Kidney Disease, or PKD.

Heidi Naylor suffers from PKD. So did her grandfather. So does her mother. So does her aunt. So do two of her brothers and sisters. Her children may ultimately develop this devastating disease as well.

Heidi's grandfather died from PKD when he was only 43 years old. Heidi's mother has undergone surgery six times in a single month to

treat the disease. She has had 38 surgeries overall and has been on dialysis for the last 15 years. Heidi's mother has suffered from numerous life threatening complications including punctured lungs, pancreatitis, and numerous infections. However, the nurses and technicians at her dialysis center call her the "Energizer Bunny," because she never gives up. She has survived longer than almost anyone else in Utah on dialysis. Heidi told me that her mother is an inspiration to her entire family because, "when you see her and her determination to live here on this earth you can't help but feel uplifted."

Heidi herself is 33 years old with three children, and has also been diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease, which is also known as PKD. Taking a cue from her indefatigable mother, she is fighting to make a difference. Heidi has become involved with Polycystic Kidney Research Foundation. She came here to Washington last week, which is when I had the pleasure of meeting her. Heidi called herself a rookie advocate, but she was extremely articulate in relating her family's compelling story, and in advocating a greater federal commitment to PKD research. Heidi says that she wants to work to ensure that effective treatments are available if her children in case they develop PKD.

Six hundred thousand Americans suffer from PKD. As Heidi's story makes clear, it is a genetic disease. It is also very painful and debilitating. Sufferers are afflicted with cysts on both kidneys which impair their functions. More than half of those afflicted develop kidney failure. In fact, PKD is the third leading cause of kidney failure. PKD sufferers make up approximately 10% of the End Stage Renal Disease population in the U.S. Medicare and Medicaid End Stage Renal Disease coverage for PKD sufferers costs the government over one billion dollars annually.

Congress can help people like Heidi and her family in their fight against the pain and the debilitating symptoms and complications of PKD.

First, we can fight for increasing funding for the NIH. I understand that the Appropriations Committee is in the process of considering a \$1.25 billion increase in NIH funding. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this needed spending increase.

Second, we should let the NIH know that it should increase the funding for PKD research through the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. NIH funding for this disease is low compared to the large number of individuals who are afflicted. Increased funding for PKD research would be a wise and compassionate investment. Scientists have recently discovered the gene that causes most cases of PKD and are working on finding ways to translate this discovery into treatments for the disease. Finally, as I have already noted, PKD costs the government over a billion dollars a year in Medicare and Medicaid coverage for End Stage Renal Disease. Effective treatments will eliminate the need for this spending.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to consider that a relatively small investment in research at the NIH can end a great deal of pain and suffering, and ultimately save the Treasury billions of dollars. It will also help Heidi Naylor and her family. It will let them

know that we in the Congress are standing beside them in their fight against PKD. And that is the least we can do.

CONCERNS FOR THE ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, two days ago the full House passed the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill. I was proud to lend my support to that bill, although there are several important issues affecting my District that I would like to bring to the attention of my House colleagues.

I represent the workers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant—one of two plants in America that originally enriched uranium for our country's nuclear weapons production program. Today, that uranium is sold to commercial nuclear power companies.

The environmental cleanup associated with the enrichment process is financed by the Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund. The President requested \$277 million for the D&D fund. The Senate bill includes \$197 million while the House bill provides \$225 million.

The federal government is responsible for this cleanup, Mr. Speaker, and further delays will result in higher long-term costs. It is my hope that the House and Senate conferees will agree to fund the D&D program at the higher House-approved funding level.

Another issue of special importance to me was raised by my colleague in the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL, during a floor discussion with Senator PETE DOMENICI, Chairman of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee.

The United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) currently manages the two uranium enrichment plants in Paducah, Kentucky and Portsmouth, Ohio. Legislation has already passed the Congress to privatize USEC and final privatization action is imminent. Once that Corporation is privatized, I have been advised that between 600 to 1,700 jobs will be lost at the two plants.

I have also been told that USEC has accrued approximately \$400 million on its books for the purpose of cleaning up the uranium waste generated by the enrichment process since USEC took over operation of the plants from the Department of Energy in 1993. However, this money only remains available until USEC is privatized and, at that point, the monies would be transferred to the Treasury.

I oppose returning those funds to the Treasury when they were originally earmarked for cleanup of USEC's uranium waste at both of the gaseous diffusion plants.

It would be my hope that my colleagues on the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee will work with me to ensure that the money earmarked for the purpose of cleaning up the uranium tails produced by USEC will continue to be dedicated for these purposes and help mitigate job losses at these plants.